



STATE OF ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Michael Sentance
 State Superintendent of Education

November 14, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Michael Sentance *MS*
 State Superintendent of Education

RE: 2017 Alabama Dance Festival Conference

The annual in-service conference of the Alabama Dance Council will be held in Birmingham, Alabama, from January 20-29, 2017. The Alabama Dance Council and the Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts are presenting a one-day professional development workshop, "The Pedagogy and Practice of Socially-Transformative Dance," designed specifically for K-12 classroom teachers and arts specialists on Friday, January 20, 2017, from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at The Dance Foundation. Nationally renowned teaching artists from CONTRA-TIEMPO offer a teaching methodology that uses storytelling and writing strategies to identify words and phrases that will then be used as a source of inspiration for original movement and choreography. Connections will be made to the new National Core Dance Standards.

In addition to the workshop, the Alabama Dance Festival has a free matinee school performance presented by CONTRA-TIEMPO on January 27, 2017, at 10 a.m. at Samford University's Leslie S. Wright Fine Arts Center. More information is available at www.alabamadancefestival.org.

I encourage you to review your budget and professional development procedures to ascertain if your classroom teachers and arts specialists may attend this conference. Your encouragement and granting of professional leave should improve your arts education programs for your system's students and teachers. The sharing of ideas and networking of arts educators through conferences of this type can be a valid approach to assisting teachers in learning and implementing new strategies to improve student achievement in your system and our state.

MS:CAM:SMR

Attachment

FY17-2012

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The 2017 Alabama Dance Festival Dance for Schools Program

The Alabama Dance Festival presents **CONTRA-TIEMPO** as the featured guest artists for the Dance for Schools Program in January 2017. For the first time, the guest company will teach the free Arts Integration Movement Workshop for classroom teachers and provide a free school performance. We **encourage** teachers to participate in the workshop on January 20 **and** to bring students to the free school performance on January 27. Trained education specialists from CONTRA-TIEMPO are teaching the workshop, making this a very special opportunity to work directly with these artists to hone your arts integration skills. **And**, you will also learn the most effective ways to engage your students in CONTRA-TIEMPO's school performance on January 27! To make reservations for the workshop and/or school performance, contact Rosemary Johnson by email rosemary@alabamadancecouncil.org or phone at 205.602.3599. More details are below!

The Pedagogy and Practice of Socially-Transformative Dance
Friday, January 20, 9:00 am – 3:30 pm
The Dance Foundation
1715 27th Court South, Birmingham, AL 35209
205.870.0073 www.thedancefoundation.org



CONTRA-TIEMPO, a multilingual LA-based Urban Latin Dance Theater company, works at the intersection of artistic production, community engagement, and leadership development. We see this triad as inextricably linked, with each element essential to the other; and with social change as a critical outcome of creative engagement. We will be sharing our pedagogy and practice with teachers, taking educators through how we make these standards-based connections by offering our assertions about democracy, our essential truths, and our approach to community engagement and education.

Participants will learn some of our movement and devising techniques, will create movement of their own, and will participate in Council circles, an indigenous story-sharing practice that we have adopted for developing our creative work. We will invite participants into a conversation of how their work makes similar connections, how opportunities can be created within their programs to make these connections, and the larger implications that this standards-based methodology can have on both the arts and education fields and our democracy as a whole. Workshop presenters include:

Rebecca Renard-Wilson (Executive Director), is a strategic thinker and social innovator. For almost 20 years, she has designed and led initiatives and programs in public schools, non-profit organizations, and city governments, gaining national recognition for her approach to blending education, social engagement, the arts, and youth leadership towards systems change and social justice. She works to help communities, and especially youth, find their creative voice, develop their critical consciousness, and step into their innate leadership abilities to create the world they know is possible.

This, and a love of the diverse dances and cultures of the African diaspora, is what draws her to CONTRA-TIEMPO. She has presented in Helsinki, Soweto, and Princeton; shared the TEDx Mid-Atlantic stage with other social innovators and thinkers; and studied dance in Brasil, Cuba, and Ghana. She received her MA in the intersection of arts and critical consciousness at NYU, has a Master's in Library and Information Science from Catholic University, and received a BA in African-American studies and religion from Oberlin College.

Diana Toledo (Company Member | Teaching Artist | Community Engagement Specialist), born and raised in Redondo Beach, California, began her journey with dance informally. Learning hip hop on the streets of Compton, where her mother owned several businesses, she eventually joined a hip hop company out of Redondo Beach called eFunk, where she danced and performed for two years. When Toledo began high school, she was introduced to the world of Salsa through a Salsa club on campus and fell in love. By her sophomore year she was the President of Sabor de Salsa, the hip hop team, and the break dance team on campus and remained President of all three throughout her time at Redondo Union High School. After graduation, she believed that her life as a dancer was over until a college elective Modern dance class made her realize that dance was her true passion. She made the life altering decision to become a Dance major and is now working towards her BFA. Toledo auditioned for CONTRA-TIEMPO in 2010 and became an apprentice for the company, training rigorously in all dance forms and participating in CONTRA-TIEMPO's Futuro Summer Intensive program for two consecutive years, after which Toledo was invited to join the professional company.

CONTRA-TIEMPO School Performance

Friday, January 27, 10:00-11:00 am

Leslie S. Wright Fine Arts Center, Samford University

800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209

205.726.2615 www.samford.edu/wrightcenter



CONTRA-TIEMPO is a Los Angeles based dance company founded and directed by Ana Maria Alvarez. The company is dedicated to transforming the world through dance. Their unique urban Latin dance theater work brings to life voices that are not traditionally heard on the concert stage. CONTRA-TIEMPO builds community, facilitates dialogue, and moves youth to imagine what is possible in the world. CONTRA-TIEMPO fuses Salsa, Afro-Cuban, and contemporary urban and abstract dance theater, to create an invigorating blend of physically intense and politically astute performance work. The school performance allows students to experience engaging,

dynamic and high-quality professional dance that is relevant to their lives by addressing a range of themes. The performance features excerpts from their newest work, *Agua Furiosa*, which is inspired by Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and "Oya," the Afro-Cuban deity of wind and storms. Themes explored in the piece include race, exile, injustice, water, drought and upheaval.

A behind-the-scenes look at the creative process, community engagement, and development of *Agua Furiosa*:

<https://vimeo.com/167022330>

Performance excerpts from *Agua Furiosa*:

<https://vimeo.com/166282063>